



**R**ecycling and  
**E**nvironmental  
**A**ction  
**P**lanning  
**S**ociety

# Greening Your Office

...one tip at a time!

We care about the environment and we know you do too. Your office is a great place to make little changes that make a big difference. Here are some ideas to help you do just that. Provided monthly by R.E.A.P.S., we hope they inspire you to create change!

**GREEN TIP #101:**  
September 2018

## *Design for Sustainability*

**“Design can enable sustainable behavior by understanding everyday needs rather than treating people as the problem.”**

Lots of design for sustainable use approaches try to change our attitudes with products and services that persuade or even guilt us into behaving 'more sustainably', by communicating particular messages and hoping we'll act differently. While the motivation here is admirable, in practice this comes down to treating people as a problem, rather than trying to solve people's problems. It's rare that people don't care about the environment. Rather, it is that in everyday life, we're trying to get things done! It's not that people are lazy, it's that we're busy; constrained by the contexts of everyday life- the temperature controls are complicated, the recycling bin is the other side of the office, the default is printing single-sided, the office is too full of junk to fit insulation and so on.



**Sustainability needs to be made easier!**

Design has a massive opportunity: enable more sustainable behavior through making it easier to do things in a more sustainable way. Lower the barriers to sustainable behavior – do research with people, in everyday contexts, to find out what the barriers are, and address them directly.

For example:

- Using heating systems inefficiently can be down to poor design of controls, not bad attitudes towards the environment. Thermostats that 'learn' can make it easier to use heating more efficiently.
- Encourage recycling by limiting the size and amount of garbage cans in the office building. Make recycling the primary option for waste disposal by making them easily accessible and prominent with signage and color coding.



Source: Lockton, D. (2013). Design for sustainability: making green behaviour easy. The Guardian.

*Do you have any questions or suggestions? Call or email us at [green\\_solutions@reaps.org](mailto:green_solutions@reaps.org)!*